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# THE PERRY BOYS

A "Social Center-Historical" Play  
in Three Scenes

FOR 10 BOYS

BY

HAROLD STRONG LATHAM

Author of "A Little Rebel"

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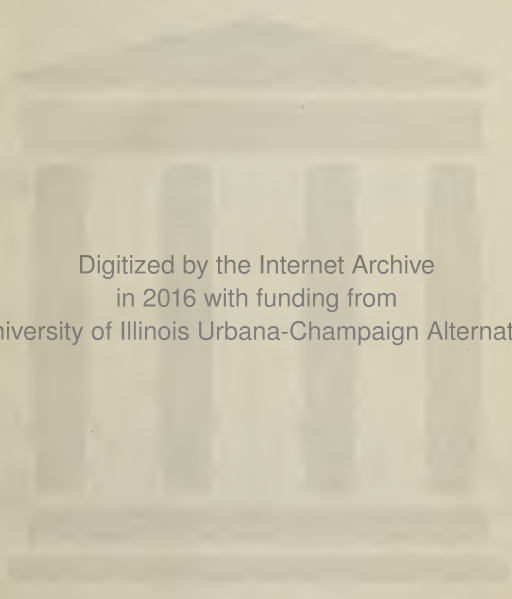
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# THE PERRY BOYS.

## SYNOPSIS.

SCENE I. *The new quarters of a recently formed boys' club.*

TIME.—*The Present,*

### "FINDING THE SHIP."

SCENE II. *A Day with PERRY. A part of the entertainment which "The Perry Boys Club" gives. The scene represents a temporary camp on the shores of Lake Erie.*

TIME.—*Early spring, 1813.*

### "LAUNCHING THE SHIP."

SCENE III. *Same as Scene I.*

### "THE ENEMY IS OURS."

*(For settings, see descriptions at beginning of each scene.)*

## CHARACTERS.

WALLACE ..... *The President of the club*  
ALFRED ..... *The Secretary of the club*

COMPTON

FLETCHER

THOMAS

ROBERT

STEVEN

JIMMIE

HERBERT

MICKIE ..... *....Of the "downtown gang."*

NOTE:—In Scene II, the parts of Perry and his aides are assumed by the characters of the first scene. With the exception of Perry the names of the first scene are retained. This arrangement provides for the playing of Perry by *Herbert*. The play may be made local by the substitution of the name of the place where it is presented, for Arlington. It may be kept up to date by revising the year references.

## COSTUMES.

### SCENES I *and* III

All of the boys with the exception of *Mickie* appear in the conventional clothes of the modern boy. *Mickie* should be dressed very shabbily.

### SCENE II

PERRY. Follow more or less closely the uniform shown in pictures of Perry. In general this is as follows:—Long-tailed cut-away coat of dark blue cloth with large gilt buttons. Flaring white collar. Blue scarf. White waistcoat. White shirt with ruffle down front. Long white trousers. Cocked hat.

MICKIE. Soiled overalls. Soft checked shirt. Slouch hat.

### ALL OF THE OTHERS.

Short plain single breasted jacket coming to the waist, made of dark blue cloth, large gilt buttons. White shirt with ruffles down the front. Long white trousers. Blue sailor hat with white band.



# THE PERRY BOYS

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## SCENE I.

### "FINDING THE SHIP."

SCENE I.—*The new quarters of a recently formed boys' club. Walls undecorated. Furniture, banners, pictures and other decorations piled still in their wrappings in a heterogeneous mass in the center of the room, just as the movers deposited them. All during the progress of the scene the boys, as they talk, are straightening things up, so that in the end the room is attractive. This bringing of order out of chaos may be made very effective if the boys have been properly drilled in the placing of each article and in the hanging of the pennants and other decorations. The furnishings should consist of chairs, several plain and several rockers, a table with books, a couch, a step-ladder, plenty of college pennants, including a Yale and a Cornell, etc., etc. The furniture may be pinned up in sheets, the unpinning of which will give the appearance of unpacking, and still be noiseless.*

*There is needed also for this scene a special banner with the words "Don't Give Up the Ship" on it. This should be about two yards long by thirty inches wide. It should be made of a dark blue cloth, (Galatea, suitable) with the letters, six inches high, in white.*

ALFRED should have his letter as called for in the scene. At the rise of the curtain WALLACE, HERBERT, JIMMIE, COMPTON, ALFRED, FLETCHER, THOMAS, ROBERT and STEVEN are on the stage each one busying himself with the unpacking and straightening up.

ALFRED. (from the top of the stepladder and holding up a college banner) Say, fellows where'll we put this?

STEVEN. What is it? Oh Yale! Well, if you take my advice, you'll hang it face to the wall.

THOMAS. Good. That's what I say too.

FLETCHER. Humph! Is that so! Much you know about Yale to be talking that way.

COMPTON. (displaying Cornell banner) I suppose this one suits you better, doesn't it, Wallie?

WALLACE. It sure does. Yale gets my goat.

ROBERT. Too bad about your g——

HERBERT. For the love of Mike, fellows, quit your squabbling over colleges and keep busy. It's a dead sure thing we'll never get settled if we go on this way.

JIMMIE. Right you are.

FLETCHER. Seems to me we ought to get a name. Here we are a club in everything but a name. Gee, that's a queer beginning. Every club has to stand for something.

WALLACE. I think we stand for something, but what to call it, that's the trouble.

JIMMIE. What do we stand for, seeing you know, tell me.

WALLACE. We're going to try to do things, not be just the ordinary kind of club for a good time. You know that club of boys in Nutley that cleaned up the town, all the rubbish and stuff, and they keep it clean too, and make people answer for it if they throw litter around the streets. And then there's that club in Forest Hill that helped a

lot in the mosquito fight, doing away with pools of water and other breeding places. The fellows in these clubs are just about our ages and we thought we'd show Arlington what we could do.

COMPTON. Oh we all know that and how we got our fathers to rent this room for our meetings and to give us the furniture, but the thing is, *what* are we going to do and *what* are we going to call ourselves?

ALFRED. I think I can help out on the last question. I was going to wait until we were all straightened up and had a business meeting, but this seems to be something like one now. I've got in my pocket a letter from Mr. Robinson. He's the man in charge of the playground up the street, you know, and he's been interested a lot in our club and sort of urged us on. Shall I read it now?

*(Chorus of "Yes," "Sure," etc.)*

ALFRED. *(takes letter from pocket and reads)* Dear Fred and all the rest: I am glad the club is going through. I like such things and wish I could be with you on your first day, but I can't and so I'm writing you instead. I have a suggestion to make with regard to the organization. If I understand your purpose correctly you want to accomplish something for the town. You think that all the old people are working and you want to, too, just for the fun of it. Fine idea! If more things were done just for the fun of it, lots more would be accomplished than is now. Well, I don't know what you are planning to do. There are enough things that you could do, and you'll find one that will appeal to you, if you keep your eyes open. But this I want particularly to say:—DON'T GIVE UP. STICK TO WHAT YOU START. There is too much shifting already.

Oliver Hazard Perry has always been my hero.

When I think of him, building that wonderful fleet way off there on the lonesome shores of Lake Erie, building it out of the trees of the forest with unskilled labor and amid untold hardships, but *building* it nevertheless with a terrific determination, and all that he might pursue a course which he felt to be right, I am moved to a tremendous admiration. "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP," he said. Stick to your posts until there is no post to stick to, he meant. And so I make this suggestion—that you call yourselves THE PERRY BOYS CLUB—the P. B. C.—and that your motto be DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP. First find a ship. Then learn to run it, that you may weather any gale and *don't give it up*.

I am sending you a banner for your new club-room.

Yours very sincerely,

E. S. ROBINSON.

FLETCHER. I like that Perry Boys name. I move we adopt it.

(*Cries of "Aye," "Aye."*)

WALLACE. As president, I will put the motion. Those who favor calling the club The Perry Boys Club will please say "aye."

ALL. Aye.

WALLACE. Those opposed.

(*Silence.*)

WALLACE. It is unanimously carried.

JIMMIE. Say, Fred, where's the banner Mr. Robinson said he was sending?

ALFRED. It hasn't come yet.

THOMAS. I propose three cheers for Perry and three cheers for the P. B. C. Now then——

WALLACE. Wait a minute. Let's have a special yell, an official one, something like this (*very de-*

*liberately as he is thinking the cheer out)* Rah!  
Rah! Rah! Perry! Perry! Perry! P. B. C.  
Don't Give Up the Ship!

COMPTON. Great! Come on now, let's try it.

*(Give yell, COMPTON leading standing on a chair. Following the cheer, there is a knock at the door and then a head is thrust cautiously in and quickly withdrawn, after which a package is thrown in.)*

HERBERT. *(calling out towards the door)* What's the matter, you kid?

*(Several boys rush out and come in with MICKIE. MICKIE is a typical tough, dirty, tousled and rough.)*

JIMMIE. What you want?

MICKIE. Aw go long, I don' wan' not'in', see?

WALLACE. Well, what are you doing here, then?

MICKIE. *(threateningly)* Look out, or I'll show y'u what I kin do.

COMPTON. *(picking up the package)* Did you bring this?

MICKIE. Sure an' didn't y'u see me bring it? What's the matter wi' y'u all? Is this the daffy house?

*(Boys laugh.)*

ROBERT. *(officiously)* No, this is not. The truth is, my young friend, we thought you were daffy. But *(pointing to the package)* what's that, a bomb?

MICKIE. *(disgustedly)* No, it's not a bomb. It's a rag what Robinson sent y'u. I was to his playground and he comes up to me and he says, "Mickie will yez do me the favor to take this out for me," and I did it, see?

WALLACE. It's the banner of course. Let's have a look at it.

*(They open it and find in big letters DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP.)*

THOMAS. That's fine. Say *(looking around)* we're getting things straightened up a bit, aren't we?

FLETCHER. *(turning from tacking up a picture)* Small thanks to you.

*(While the boys are admiring the banner MICKIE strolls around and examines things.)*

MICKIE. *(when he has completed his tour of investigation)* Some swell joint you have here. What'cher call it?

ALFRED. It's a club. We've decided to call it the P. B. C.

MICKIE. A club. Humph! It ain't much like ourn.

WALLACE. You have a club, too? What's the name of yours?

MICKIE. Aw, we ain't got no name. It's just a lot of us newsboys what goes round together.

WALLACE. What do you do to make yourselves a club? Do you have meetings and where do you hold them?

MICKIE. Sure we have meetin's—in the alley down by the Palace Saloon, most every night. We don't have no other place, but still we do all right except when the cop chases us.

FLETCHER. What does the cop chase you for?

MICKIE. *(significantly)* Craps.

COMPTON. Craps?

MICKIE. *(impatiently)* Yes, craps. Shootin' craps. Don't youse guys know not'in'? Like this—*(he starts to show, but WALLACE interferes).*

WALLACE. Never mind. We know enough. And you mean to tell us that all your club does is to shoot craps and that it meets in a saloon alleyway? Goodness, I should think you would rather go down to the library.

MICKIE. You make me sick. Do you t'ink we fellows always want to read? But you don't need to rub it in that we ain't got your chances. (*Looks around room admiringly*). We know it. But wait until we get a little older and have more dough, why then we can go to a reg'lar billiard room or pool place or somethin' like that. Until then nobody don' need to shed no tears over us. We kin take care of ourselves. So long, kids, I'm off. I wish you luck with your swell fixin's here.

(*Exit MICKIE, with a last admiring look at the room. No one speaks for a few minutes after he has gone and then WALLACE picks up the DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP banner which has been lying across the table.*)

WALLACE. Boys, I think we've found our ship.

ALL. What? What? What? What do you mean?

WALLACE. You heard what he said about his crowd not having our chances. Well, it's true. Here we are with our fine club room and look what they have.

ALFRED. Well, what can we do about it?

FLETCHER. (*excitedly breaking in*) I see what. Have you ever heard of a Social Center? They had one where I used to live, a big room with games and all sorts of fun. Sometimes they have a whole building and give entertainments and everything is free and everybody can come and do what they want. It's really a big club for people who haven't any.

COMPTON. That's the idea. Our ship shall be *The Social Center*. We'll start a crusade to get a

club for Mickie and his gang. He's right, too. Where can the fellows in Arlington go on an evening if they haven't got the money to start a club like ours?

JIMMIE. My mother'd say they'd better stay home and go to bed.

THOMAS. Yes, but they won't, not all kinds of fellows.

HERBERT. What I don't see is, how we're going to help.

WALLACE. We can get up an entertainment and—Oh, I don't know, but when the people start talking it'll be easy enough.

STEVEN. Great! We'll give a show. Perhaps some kind of a Perry show. Robinson will help us, and we'll talk and talk and talk about the need of a club for Mickie. Our ship will be a warship and (*deliver very dramatically at front of stage and more or less directly at the audience*) we'll discharge bombs of social center arguments, here—and there—and there—(*pointing at sections of the audience*). We'll go right out and make things hot and after a time our bombs will explode and the first thing you know, there won't be any street corner club.

(*During this speech WALLACE has been quietly hanging the DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP banner in a conspicuous place left for it in the center of the back wall. The room should now be wholly settled and when STEVEN has finished speaking, WALLACE turns around on the ladder after having adjusted the last tack.*)

WALLACE. (*pointing to the flag*) Our flag! Our battle cry! The engagement is on. Three cheers for Perry—Come now——

(*Curtain as the cheer given before, is repeated.*)

## SCENE II.

## A DAY WITH PERRY.

## "LAUNCHING THE SHIP."

SCENE II. *This is a part of the entertainment which "The Perry Boys Club" gives. The scene represents one of PERRY'S temporary camps on the shores of Lake Erie in the spring of 1813, in the early morning. A very pretty setting may be made by clearing the stage of all furniture and then lining it at the extreme back and sides with young trees in full leaf. Erect also at the back, left, a small tent; at the back, right, a camp fire, fashioned by laying sticks over a light with red shades. Hang over this a kettle on a tripod. The trees may be made to stand up by the use of ordinary "Christmas tree" standards which should be covered up with brush. If for any reason trees are not obtainable, a plain setting with the tent and fire will do very well. At the front right, a small flag pole—12 feet or so high—should be erected. All during this scene the lights should be kept low to give the effect of dawn.*

*Before the rise of curtain the reveille is heard. The curtain parts disclosing the camp with ROBERT and ALFRED seated cross legged by the fire. Enter THOMAS and STEVEN with the flag. They go to the pole and raise the flag, ROBERT and ALFRED standing up and saluting. It should be so arranged that the flag will be raised just as the reveille, played off stage, is finished. Exit STEVEN and THOMAS.*

*Beside the properties already described there are needed for this scene the flag with which the two boys enter, a drum and the "official papers" with which FLETCHER should be provided as called for.*

ROBERT. What time is Lieutenant Perry expected?

ALFRED. About six this morning. That must be pretty soon. This is his first stop.

ROBERT. Is he going to visit all of the stations to-day?

ALFRED. I believe so.

ROBERT. Why does he have them scattered, do you suppose? I should think one big camp would have been safer.

ALFRED. Well, this is only a very temporary arrangement until he gets things in running order. It would take more men, you see, to cover all this ground in here. Pretty soon, in a few days at the most, the Pennsylvania militia will be here on guard and then things will be different. As it is now there is one camp here, another here, another here, another here, and so on, nine in all, each with its force of men, and all within a very short radius. Of course, at present the camps are nothing but carpentry shops, for all the time is spent in building the fleet, each camp having to build one ship.

ROBERT. And just as soon as more men are secured we're going to be united into one big organization? I see. There are going to be some new recruits, aren't there, to-day?

ALFRED. Yes. That's what the Lieutenant is coming for, to see them. He's had his officers out trying to enlist the farmers round-about and they are to report to him here this morning, bringing the new men with them. Perry doesn't want fighters so much now, as he does workers, who can cut trees, saw wood and hammer.

*(As he finishes speaking there is the sound of some one coming. Enter STEVEN. ALFRED and ROBERT rise, and salute him. The salute is returned.)*

STEVEN. Lieutenant Perry.

*(They all fall back to the side in a straight line and PERRY (HERBERT) enters and comes slowly up past them. The three boys hold the salute, PERRY touching his cap in acknowledgment.)*

PERRY. Have my aides arrived yet?

STEVEN. One is here, sir, awaiting you, and the others are expected any moment.

PERRY. Order the present one to me.

STEVEN. Very good, sir.

*(Exit STEVEN. He returns almost immediately with THOMAS. THOMAS salutes PERRY.)*

PERRY. Well, sir, what success?

THOMAS. I have twenty men, sir, at your command.

PERRY. Very good. You may order them to Camp B to work under Ford on the ship Niagara.

THOMAS. Very well, sir.

PERRY. Have you made any selections from the number of superior men as I asked.

THOMAS. I have sir. There are four men better than the others. They are now getting into their uniforms.

PERRY. Send them to me.

THOMAS. I will do so. And the others?

PERRY. You will set to work on the ship Niagara in Camp B as I have said. Go now.

*(Exit THOMAS. Enter WALLACE, FLETCHER, COMPTON and JIMMIE. Three of these boys*

*have no idea as to proper military conduct. One of them bows very low and awkwardly before PERRY, another takes off his hat, the third does nothing but stare. The fourth only, (FLETCHER) salutes properly.)*

PERRY. Are you the men my officer has selected?

FLETCHER. We are, sir. *(very properly)*

PERRY. Have you had military training—you sir—you—you—you—*(pointing to each, to FLETCHER the last, and getting the answer "No" from all but him.)*

FLETCHER. Just a little, sir, in a local guard.

PERRY. I suppose your records have all been looked up. That was my order. *(he turns to STEVEN)*

STEVEN. They have, sir, in so far as possible.

PERRY. Too bad you haven't all had training. Let's see if you are going to be likely pupils. Line up. Mark time.

*(Grotesque line up.)*

PERRY. Pretty bad.

WALLACE. Maybe we aren't very well drilled, but we're loyal. We'll do anything for you.

PERRY. *(moved)* That's what I need, too, loyalty. I have a very ticklish commission for you four men. I am choosing you because you are new and those who undertake this must not be known as members of my guard. I have heard reports to the effect that about ten miles down the shore a British ship has landed, and that its men are even now advancing upon us with the purpose of devastating our camp and laying waste the work of these hard winter months. I want that report proved or disproved. Are you good for it?

*(During this speech, FLETCHER looks startled and uneasy, drawing away a little from the others.)*

ALL. (FLETCHER *the most emphatically of all*)  
Yes.

PERRY. Come this way and we will talk things over in detail.

(Exit PERRY, FLETCHER, WALLACE, COMPTON,  
JIMMIE.)

ALFRED. I don't like the sound of that. A surprise by the British, and all would likely be ruined.

ROBERT. We've had our warning. Lieutenant Perry'll see that we are prepared. Hark! Who goes there?

(*This as a noise is heard back of the tent. They investigate and come in with MICKIE. While representing a character of 1813 MICKIE is nevertheless the same kind of person that he is in the first act.*)

ALFRED. Explain your presence here.

STEVEN. Yes and be quick about it.

ROBERT. Hurry! Hurry!

MICKIE. (*at first too thoroughly frightened to reply*) There's—there's—I've—you—why—not—in'. I don't want not'in'.

ROBERT. Well this is not the place to find it. You'll always *get something* here, spying around.

MICKIE. I wasn't spyin', honest to goodness I wasn't.

STEVEN. Tell it to the stars. You were spying. You're probably a Britisher. I've a good notion to shoot you on the spot.

(PERRY *has entered and heard this last. He comes up and looks at MICKIE.*)

PERRY. What's the trouble?

(Enter FLETCHER who stays at the back. As he sees MICKIE he starts nervously.)

ALFRED. (*addressing PERRY*) We caught him (*indicating MICKIE*) sneaking around in the bushes.

MICKIE. (*falling down on his knees before PERRY*) Honest I wasn't intendin' not'in'. I—I was just curious.

FLETCHER. (*coming forward to PERRY*) If you will pardon me, sir, I will vouch for this man. I know him. He's poor but (*in an off-hand manner*) honest enough, I guess.

PERRY. (*suspiciously looking at both FLETCHER and MICKIE*) Very well. But I think we'd better keep him (*pointing to MICKIE*) here. He can help the—the cook.

STEVEN. Very well, sir. I will see that it is done.

PERRY. Come, my men.

(*Exit all but MICKIE and FLETCHER.*)

FLETCHER. (*angrily*) What are you up to now?

MICKIE. (*deliberately*) I'm watchin' you.

FLETCHER. Well you can just quit it and tend to your own business, do you understand.

MICKIE. That's what I intend to do. I'm after traitors.

FLETCHER. That's a strong word.

MICKIE. I didn't ask you to accept it, but be careful, that's all. At the first sign of your playin' false, I'll tell Perry who and what you are.

FLETCHER. You tell him—ha—ha—ha. (*exit laughing scornfully. MICKIE follows him slowly.*)

(Enter PERRY. He stands and gazes into the fire.)

PERRY. (*very slowly*) What will the answer

be? For three long months now we have been laboring against great odds, attempting the impossible, striving to make out of the trees of the forest and such material as Nature furnishes us with—a fleet with which to protect these grand shores of this great nation. “Foolish,” our enemies say, and “Ridiculous.” Well, doubtless it is, but it is the fools sometimes that turn the current of affairs. Who knows—we shall have the boats if all goes well; we have courage in plenty. With such a union we can dare much. And at any rate—we can only fail—and die—ah—pshaw (*shaking himself*) I am blue to-day—we’re bound to succeed; we’re right and who ever heard of might’s conquering right——

(*Continues to stare into the fire. In the meantime MICKIE has entered cautiously, looking carefully to the right and left. Stops when he sees PERRY, goes forward, hesitates and finally comes up to him doubtfully.*)

MICKIE. Sir.

PERRY. (*startled*) What! (*looking around*) Oh, (*indifferently*) it’s you, is it? Well what do you want?

MICKIE. I—I want—I wanted to say you’ve got a spy among your new men.

PERRY. A spy?

MICKIE. Yep—yes, sir, I mean. He’s that—that one what told you I was all right. He saved me then to save his own neck.

PERRY. How do you know all this? That man’s an American.

MICKIE. I know he is, but he and I used to live in the same town together and he got caught helpin’ the Britishers to get men, United States men you know, and he’d swear they was escapes from the English navy. Well, after they found that out—

that was back in Massachusetts—they made it so hot for him he had to run away, and he did and joined the English. It was several weeks ago when I started out from near Cleveland to come up here and see if I couldn't be one of your workers that I ran into him. He pretended he didn't know me and that he was a loyal United States'r—but it wan't no use and when he saw me here he said what he did because he knew I'd warn you and he wanted his chance to get away.

PERRY. Why didn't you tell me all this at the time?

MICKIE. Well, you had me so scared I couldn't talk. I wasn't spyin' for the English; I was spyin' for you, to see what that man was goin' to do. You want to hurry or he'll get away. That's what he come for, I'm sure, to give some sort of a signal to the red coaters when it would be a good time for 'em to rush in.

PERRY. (*tragically*) I've given him orders and sent him away.

MICKIE. My gracious! That's what he wanted, (*very excited*) to be sent away, and was what you give him valuable?

PERRY. It was a notice to my other camps of the possible attack from the British, warning them to be on their guard. Of course, he won't deliver any of the messages if what you say is true and we'll be lost.

MICKIE. Something must be done. Quick! Give me some men. He's afraid of me than of most people cause I know all about him. I'll bring him back. He can't have gone far.

PERRY. (*hesitatingly*) I—I believe I'll trust you. Come and I'll show you the way and fix you up with men.

(*Exit hurriedly PERRY and MICKIE.*)

(*Enter WALLACE, COMPTON, and JIMMIE.*)

WALLACE. I wish he'd hurry up and tell us what to do. I'm in a fever of excitement to be off, aren't you?

JIMMIE. Yes. He said he'd be right in with our orders. That other man has already got his and gone.

(WALLACE and JIMMIE sit down. COMPTON looks around the camp curiously and discovers a drum in the tent.)

COMPTON. (taking out the drum) Look what I've got here. (looks around secretively and finally taking the drum-sticks up beats the drum several times loudly in an inquiring sort of way.)

NOTE.—If the part of COMPTON can be played by some one who knows how to play the drum it will be very effective to introduce here instead of the drum beating, a regular drum solo.

(Enter PERRY after the sound of the drum.)

PERRY. What was that? Oh, you. (as he sees COMPTON still with the drum) I thought they were upon us.

WALLACE. (frightened) Upon us? What? Who?

PERRY. We are in danger of attack. I have decided not to send you off on the commission I had spoken of, for the rumors of the British landing are even now confirmed. I shall need you to fight, most likely. Go down to the third tent and wait for me there.

(Exit COMPTON, WALLACE, JIMMIE. Almost immediately there is the sound of shouting, at first softly as if far away then growing louder. Then enter ALFRED, THOMAS, ROBERT, STEVEN,

FLETCHER, COMPTON, WALLACE, JIMMIE *and* MICKIE. FLETCHER, *bound, is being led by MICKIE in triumph.*)

MICKIE. (*going up to PERRY with FLETCHER*) Here he is, sir. Search 'im.

PERRY. (*searching*) Here are my papers, (*removing papers from FLETCHER'S pockets*)—and these—what are these—communications bearing the seal of the British government and addressed to the officer in charge of the English squadron—I must examine these. Humph! (*looks at papers*).

STEVEN. (*to ROBERT*) Who found out about the traitor?

ROBERT. That fellow there (*points to MICKIE*). And he caught him too. Gee, but he's a hustler.

STEVEN. (*very deliberately as upon this hinges the thought of the piece*) It's always that way. Give fellows like him a *chance* and that's all they need—a chance.

PERRY. Attention, my men.

(*The boys group themselves on stage. PERRY at back and the others in parallel lines from back to front.*)

PERRY. We have been in grave danger. It has been averted for the time being by the tact and courage of a man whom we suspected. I learn from these dispatches that there is no likelihood of an attack for some few days at any rate. It was the intention of the English to await the return of this hireling here (*pointing to FLETCHER*) with the information they wanted as to our equipment. We'll see that they don't get the information and the failure of their messenger to return will likely cause delay. In the meantime we'll get ready for them so that when the attack is made, *they'll* be the ones

surprised. We'll send a message to the other eight stations—and this time we'll send our new recruit (*pointing to MICKIE*). And now, men, to your posts.

*(Line up and very short drill, any little military drill will do, which PERRY and MICKIE watch. FLETCHER bound, back by the tent. At the close of the maneuvers, the boys all exit, PERRY, his arm around MICKIE, following at some distance. Curtain down with FLETCHER, hanging his head, alone on the stage.)*

Follow immediately with TABLEAU:—NIGHT. Before rise of curtain bugle sounds "Taps." Curtain rises showing all the boys grouped around the flag pole while the flag is lowered.

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### SCENE III.

"THE ENEMY IS OURS."

SCENE III.—*Same as Scene I. A few days after the entertainment. The club room in good order, attractively furnished and decorated. ALFRED, WALLACE, ROBERT, STEVEN, HERBERT, THOMAS, JIMMIE and FLETCHER on stage at rise of curtain.*

FLETCHER. How'd we come out in the Perry show, Fred! Have you got it figured up yet?

ALFRED. Oh, pretty well. I guess we'll have about \$100 clear.

HERBERT. And now what are we going to do? We mustn't stop.

WALLACE. We don't intend to. We're going

right ahead to get a building, only of course we haven't money enough to rent it for long. I think, though, that when people see we're in earnest there'll be help coming from somewhere.

(*Enter COMPTON.*)

COMPTON. (*importantly*) What's that about help from somewhere? You don't know anything about it. I've been having some experiences since I left you a little while ago.

HERBERT. Tell 'em to us.

COMPTON. Give me a chance, will you? Well, in the first place I started out to go down town and as I passed the Palace Saloon Mickie rushed out from the alley and grabbed me. "Come here," he said, hauling me back into the corner and there I found his gang. A tough bunch, too, believe me. "What's all this guff about a club for us," one of 'em growls at me. I explain calmly and as best I can. "Listen to the bluffer," another one yells and so it goes, first one hollering something and then another, and all of 'em laughing at the idea of a club, sneering at it, you know, and holding that they're all right as they are. It made me sore.

STEVEN. Probably they didn't mean it. Most likely they were quite excited.

ALFRED. Gee, that certainly makes it hard. If they don't want to have things done for 'em.

ROBERT. I've always heard it was that way with that kind of folks—they prefer to be let alone.

WALLACE. I don't believe it. Not if they really understand. Prefer dirt and an alley-way and all the rest of the rottenness? Bah—that isn't reason.

COMPTON. Well, when you get through scrap-ping I'll tell you the rest, the best yet.

THOMAS. Tell away, little one, tell away. We're all attention.

COMPTON. I finally escaped from them, Mickie's

gang, you know, but a few minutes later I ran into Robinson as I was walking up Midland Avenue. He was all excited like and clapped me on the shoulder and shouted, "Well, you've done it, old boy, you and your P. B. C." "Done what?" I said. "Got 'em going," he answered. "All they needed was a light to start the fire; the fuel was there. The P. B. C. was the light." And then he explains that—he explains that—(*pause tantalizingly*).

ROBERT. Go along. Stop your fooling.

THOMAS. Yes, cut it and get down to the facts.

COMPTON. He explains that our movement and the play and all, have called attention to the need of a Recreation Hall in the lower end of the town and that already one man has come forward and offered a building free for the cause and others have agreed to furnish it and to help pay its running expenses.

WALLACE. (*dumbfounded*) For mercy's sake. (*recovering his composure quickly*) Well, isn't that what I said? Get people talking, make 'em see what's wanted, and that's all you need to do.

COMPTON. The best part of it, for us anyway, is that it's all going to be done through the P. B. C. The building is going to be given to us and everything run through us. We're sort of to father the scheme.

ALL. Whew!

ALFRED. Well, the first experiment of our club seems to be turning out fairly successfully.

HERBERT. I should say it is.

WALLACE. But we mustn't rest on that; we must keep things humming. The old people have come to our aid as they always do,—A cheer for the old people.

ALL. (*WALLACE leading*) Old People, Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Old People.

FLETCHER. We must, however, show them that

we can do our part in carrying the campaign through. Remember Mickie. We have him yet to deal with.

COMPTON. Oh yes, Mickie. We may have him personally to deal with right off. He said he was coming up here to see us this afternoon.

ALFRED. Good, let him come. Fellows, we must make him like us, treat him nicely as though he were one of us. Nobody wants the Lady Bountiful act passed out to him.

*(There is a loud knock at the door.)*

JIMMIE. I'll bet that's Mickie now.

WALLACE. Come in.

*(Enter MICKIE. The boys rush around him, shaking his hand. MICKIE does not respond, but regards them all suspiciously.)*

THOMAS. Glad to see you. You haven't been up here for ages.

STEVEN. Drop in any old time.

MICKIE. *(doubtfully)* Are youse guys on the level? I thought youse was handin' me the merry ha, ha, the last time I was here.

COMPTON. *(stretching out his hand)* Mickie, we're your friends—your friends. We want you to be ours.

MICKIE. Honest?

COMPTON. Honest. Isn't that so, fellows?

ALL. Yes.

MICKIE. Friend, then. *(takes his hand)* But what I came fur was to find out about this here club you're gettin' us. Is it goin' to be a reg'lar club or just a sort of church where we're to be preached at?

COMPTON. A regular club—that is if you'll let us, a club where you and all your gang can go and

do just what you like. But I was afraid from the way they acted this morning that they didn't want such a club.

MICKIE. Want it? They're so crazy about it they're losin' sleep for fear they won't get it. Do you suppose we don't know a good thing when we see it—only we want to be sure we *see* it, that's all.

WALLACE. What did I tell you? Mickie, (*genially*) you're all right. Everybody's all right. Isn't that so bunch?

ALL. (*laughingly*) "You bet," "Yes," "Sure," etc.

COMPTON. *Don't Give Up the Ship!* Fine words those we took for our motto but no finer than Perry's famous remark *after* his victory.

HERBERT. No, and we can say those words with Perry now. (*very impressively*) *We have met the enemy and they are ours.*

MICKIE. Enemy! Who was your enemy?

WALLACE. There wasn't any, but thoughtlessness and ignorance and carelessness, but sometimes they're the very worst to combat. However, folks aren't so bad after all—you've only got to show 'em.

MICKIE. We're all from Missouri, you see.

WALLACE. Boys, here it is more than one hundred years since Perry fought his great fight, but he's still leading people on to good accomplishments. It's a wonderful thing—a life that lives on like that, isn't it?

MICKIE. It's a thing what makes you want to try to do things and be somebody.

FLETCHER. Let's all salute Perry's influence, his spirit of perseverance, of courage, honor and manliness.

(*The boys turn and salute the "Don't Give Up the Ship" banner still hanging on the wall.*)

MICKIE. (*looks around, first at the boys uncomprehendingly, then at the banner when he seems to understand*) And me, too—me, too. (*salutes also.*)

(*Curtain while salute is held.*)

CURTAIN.

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